

Museum Quarterly Report July-September 2003

Overview

This has been another busy quarter for the museum. The summer tourist season brought visitors from all over the world into the museum. As a member of the Cultural Network, the museum took part in the Cultural Triathlon Passport program from May through July. (The Cultural Network is a consortium of Boise Museum, libraries, educational institutions and service organizations collaborating to schedule and promote programs, exhibits, and activities of interest to Idaho residents and visitors.) The Triathlon was billed as an event for the mind, body and soul and participants were asked to complete one Summer Reading program, participate in two physical activities, and visit three museum or educational organizations. Of the 132 participants, 72 visited the museum as part of the program. The gala was held on August 9 where participants picked up prizes for completing the program. Museum Educator, Kurt Zwolfer was on hand to teach the fine art of roping cattle along with music and refreshments.

Staff took down the "Rivers of Lewis and Clark" in July. The exhibit drew about 7,000 visitors while it was here.

Ken Swanson and John Dadabay traveled to Austin in late August to pick up our Jefferson peace Medal and four exhibit quality life-sized figures of Lewis and Clark, Twisted Hair and Seaman. The Peace Medal is back on exhibit, where it will remain through the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial and staff is already planning an exhibit for the figures.

The Museum is pleased to announce that it will receive \$39,720.00 from the Idaho Governor's Lewis & Clark Trail Committee to create an interpretive center in Pioneer Village adjacent to the Museum. This building will be built using hand-hewn timber frame construction in use at the time of the Corps of Discovery. It will be designed to open out providing a shaded outdoor amphitheater with seating for easily accessed programs. Also included will be an exhibit focusing on the unique geography, flora and fauna and scientific principles that Lewis and Clark saw and used in Idaho.

To enhance the exhibit, a small garden next to the structure will be planned and created incorporating native Idaho plants with an emphasis on the specimens collected by Lewis & Clark and some types of food and medicinal plants they brought with them. Educational programming will be developed, including hands-on activities from pressing plants to making maps and living history presentations such as building a dugout canoe. An audiovisual presentation about Lewis & Clark's journey for educational use in the structure will also be produced in a format allowing off-site use for schools and other sites.

Construction on the amphitheater is scheduled to begin in May of 2004. The goal for completion of the project will be April of 2005.

The Museum hosted an exhibit of the Idaho Immigrant community put together by the Idaho Community Action Network. The exhibit ran from September 16 to 26.

The Survivors of Wake, Guam and Cavite met the first weekend of September for what will be the last annual meeting for the group. As part of annual conference and get-together, they toured the Old Idaho Penitentiary. Featured was a special exhibit of their artifacts located in the new J.C. Earl Exhibit with a guided tour by Ken Swanson. Many of the men worked for Morrison Knudsen Company when the Japanese captured them on Wake Island on December 23, 1941. Their group designated the Idaho State Historical Society as the repository of their artifacts and memorabilia in 1984. Over the years, the ISHS has received many donations from them but this is the first time many of the men had seen all of their artifacts gathered in one place.

The annual Museum Comes to Life was held on September 27. It was a beautiful day and one of the biggest turnouts to date. Over 250 volunteers participated in many different activities. Over 60 different presentations took place including blacksmith, printing, calligraphy, a display of antique dolls, broom-making and new this year were cattle roping, the Natural

History of Lewis and Clark table with fish printing, rawhide braiding, antique motorcycles and there were also sightings of Abe Lincoln and General Grant. It was a very successful day and enjoyed by an estimated crowd of 5000.

The museum hours have been adjusted to accommodate seasonal business. We will be open Tuesday through Friday 9 to 5 pm, Saturday 11-5 pm and closed Sundays and Mondays from October through April.

Personnel

No change

Gifts and Donations

We had 16 donations in the past quarter. Nancy Barker Shaw donated "camp" items used by her and her sister Becky while they were in the Girl Scouts during the 60s. The girls went to Lake Coeur d'Alene at Camp Echoes in 1967, 68, and 69. Included in the donation was a Girls Scout toiletry kit, bolo tie, kerchief, cup and binoculars.

Travel

In State:

None this quarter

Out of State:

Ken Swanson- August-Austin, TX.

John Dadabay-August-Austin, TX

Exhibits and Traveling Trunks

The "On the Road with Lewis and Clark" grant is allowing the traveling trunks to reach some education facilities that are on limited funds. The grant has been in affect since August and will continue to June of 2004. The trunks have a full schedule with being booked through May of 2004.

The traveling exhibits have also been busy this quarter, traveling to different facilities. Racies Historica was on exhibit for the grand opening of the Hispanic Cultural Center of Idaho in Nampa.

Brown Bag Lectures

The first Brown Bag was September 9, with Arthur hart speaking about Train Systems in Idaho. The lecture was well received with approximately 125 in attendance.

Events this Quarter

7/20-7/21-BSU-Department of Biology

8/17-Boise Public Library meeting

9/5, 6 & 7-Wake Island-J.C Earl Museum

9/9-Brown Bag-Trains-Arthur Hart

9/16-9/26-Idaho Immigrants Photo Exhibit

9/20-AG dinner

Upcoming Events

10/10-IHC reception-4:30-7:30 pm-Author AndreaVogt; Common Courage: Bill Wassmuth, Human Rights, and Small Town Activism.

10/14-Brown Bag-Aukera: A History of Basques in Idaho-John Bieter

10/22-Compass meeting-6:00-10:00 pm

10/25-10/25-Gary Stroutsos (not confirmed) 7:00 pm

Education

Personnel-new intern Abby Buckmaster

Program Updates

- ***Museum Programs***-We are starting into the first phase of our heavy school use season. Reservations seem to be coming in as frequently as last year quelling fears that recent cuts in school funding coupled with increased reliance on standards would cut into field trips. A volunteer orientation day was held in early September, with good response from the public. If the group holds out through training, our docent needs will be covered for the fall. Several new programs are ready for the season. Teacher response to the added offerings has been positive.
- ***History day***- An intern from the BSU history department named Abby Buckmaster was hired to help with this year's effort. Initial organization is under way for the contest, including setting regional and state dates, updating web information, contacting prize donors, and preparing a promotional mailing. Kurt also gave a presentation at the annual GATE teacher's conference to promote the event. In October, he will be traveling to College Park, Maryland to take part in a training session for state contest coordinators. All travel and lodging expenses will be paid by the national office.
- ***Prospector Club***-Promotional mailings were sent out in early September to elicit new support for the prospector club. With the help of Fred Fritchman, Chris Brady, and a new volunteer, the first expanded on-line issue of the prospector club magazine is almost complete.
- ***Other***-Preparations continue to set up new programs for the Earl exhibit. Gary Keith of the Military Museum, Rochelle of the Old Pen, and Kurt have set up a work group in order to better design and promote the programs. The museum set up a station at the Boise Library for the cumulating event of the Cultural Passport program. The event was very successful, with greater than expected participation. The museum looks forward to future collaborations with this group.

Historic Sites

A new architect was hired for preliminary design work for the Rock Creek Interpretation Center.

A new flooring system was installed in the Hatch house and the fiberboard ceiling downstairs has been removed. A new flooring system is also being planned for the Doney house, along with a contract for installation of the electrical systems in both the Doney and Hatch houses.

At the Old Penitentiary, the re-roofing of the guard towers in the #2 yard began. The masonry class at BSU reappointed the stonework on the geo thermal pump house, also located at the site.

The society has received a donation from Art Albansese (board member of the Bishop House) for the new room system at the pump house.

The site maintenance crew has rebuilt the 16-foot equipment trailer, thus making it easier for smaller jobs instead of using the bigger trailer.

Repairs are now complete on the collapsed sanitation chase at the Old Pen site.

With DPW funds, re-roofing on two of the false front buildings, the electrical and tattoo exhibits are now complete. The DPW funds will also include an engineer study for the stabilization of the northwest wall.

The State Agriculture department ran a core analysis on the foundation soils for the society.

Preliminary engineering study for the Administration building located the Old Pen is now complete and now waiting for the results.

No word yet on the 1951 and 1907 Steam Plant.

The Master Plan due from the Botanical Gardens has not been received.

Old Idaho Penitentiary

Visitation and Revenue

This quarter the Old Idaho Penitentiary had 7,332 visitors.

The admission price increase approved by the ISHS Board of Trustees went into effect September 2.

Education

Twenty educational/children's groups with a total of 865 students and chaperones visited the Old Idaho Penitentiary this quarter.

Interpretation

The Old Penitentiary returned to its winter schedule on September 2. Guided walks continue to be offered on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday.

Special Events

Extended Systems hosted an after hours self-guided tour of the Old Penitentiary on September 22. Approximately 50 people from all over the U.S. and the world, including New Zealand and Slovakia, came to visit the site after a day of training seminars hosted by Extended Systems.

Personnel

In September, Brian Umbaugh was hired to replace part-time interpreter Christine Callison on weekends.

Volunteers

This quarter twenty-two volunteers donated 591 hours of their time to the Old Idaho Penitentiary.

Respectfully submitted by

Kenneth J. Swanson
Administrator
Idaho State Historical Museum and sites